

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 2, and ending on page 8, line 14, as follows:

The invention provides a semiconductor manufacturing process wherein openings can be plasma etched in low-k dielectric layers while providing desired selectivity to underlying and/or overlying dielectric layers such as silicon dioxide ( $\text{SiO}_2$ ), silicon nitride ( $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$ ), silicon carbide ( $\text{SiC}$  or ~~HsiG~~ HSiC), silicon oxynitride and photoresist materials (PR). Such selectivity is of great interest in the manufacture of damascene structures wherein one or more low-k dielectric layers are incorporated in a multilayer structure. During manufacture of such structures, features such as contacts, vias, conductor lines, etc. are etched in dielectric materials such as oxide and organosilicate glass layers in the manufacture of integrated circuits. The invention overcomes a problem with prior etching techniques wherein the selectivity between the low-k dielectric etch rate and the overlying mask/photoresist layers was too low for commercial applications. Such selectivity problems are solved by utilizing an etching gas chemistry which reduces the etch rates of the mask/photoresist layers relative to the low-k dielectric material.